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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-first year

Identical letters dated 5 April 2006 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

In grave breach of international law, including international humanitarian law, Israel, the occupying Power, continues to use excessive and indiscriminate force and to launch military attacks against the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In the period of just two days since my last letter to you, the occupying forces have killed at least two more Palestinian civilians, including a 15-year-old boy, and wounded dozens of others, including a mother and her 6-month-old baby.

Yesterday, Israeli occupying forces carried out air and artillery raids and attacks against the Gaza Strip. Using heavy military weaponry, including F-16 warplanes, the occupying forces fired missiles into the compound of the President of the Palestinian Authority and Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Mahmoud Abbas. The missiles landed at the President's helicopter landing pad about 100 metres from his office, leaving deep craters in the ground. President Abbas told reporters that the Israeli escalation is not justified and that Israel, the occupying Power "wants to sabotage the daily life of the Palestinian people and to fully destroy the institutions of the Palestinian National Authority and its security apparatuses, after partially destroying them all over the past five years". He concluded by stating, "the attacks were aimed at destruction for the sake of destruction".

The Israeli strikes also targeted three other sites in densely populated civilian areas in the Gaza Strip. As a result, at least one Palestinian was killed, and more than 10 were wounded, including a mother and her 6-month-old baby. The bloodshed and vast destruction of homes, roads and properties inflicted by the occupying forces in this already devastated area have caused widespread suffering, panic and fear to spread among the population and further deepened the severe humanitarian crisis being faced by the Palestinian people.

It must be highlighted that despite the warnings by United Nations aid organizations that the Gaza Strip is on the verge of a humanitarian disaster, the

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occupying Power continues with its policy of systematic closures, blockades and curfews, creating a shortage of the most basic medicine and food, including infant formula and powdered milk. An official from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat has confirmed that there has been no significant change in the situation and that the Gaza Strip is on the verge of facing a humanitarian crisis as bad as the one in Kosovo. Moreover, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has warned of the unfolding humanitarian disaster caused by the Israeli closures of the Karni crossing, which has exponentially increased the number of starving people in Gaza.

Moreover, according to statistics of the World Bank, if there is no real change in the situation in the Gaza Strip 75 per cent of the residents will be blow the poverty line within two years. We call on the international community to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to halt its policy of starvation against the Palestinian people and immediately lift its blockade and allow food and medicine consignments to reach the tens of thousands of Palestinians in Gaza, which are intended not only for their well-being but also for their survival.

In another tragic event, on Monday, 3 April 2006, a 15-year-old Palestinian boy was shot dead by Israeli occupying forces near the Qalandiya refugee camp, west of Ramallah. Two other children were wounded in the incident. This is only one of many such horrific incidents where young Palestinian children have been killed by Israeli occupying forces. Since September 2000, more than 720 Palestinian children have been killed in cold blood by Israeli occupying forces.

It is starkly evident that it is the intention of Israel, the occupying Power, to cause as much death and destruction, both civilian and material, as possible in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, through its deliberate use of excessive, indiscriminate and completely disproportionate force against the occupied population. Indeed, in both word and action, the occupying Power has indicated that it will in fact continue with its aggression and its illegal policies, further compounding the suffering of the Palestinian people, who are already living in impoverished conditions under its brutal occupation.

The international community must take action to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its military attacks and to scrupulously abide by international law, particularly the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Lack of firm action by the international community will only allow Israel to carry on with impunity its illegal policies and practices against the Palestinian civilian population, leading to even more death, injury and loss for the Palestinian people, further fomenting the vicious cycle of violence and further destabilizing this dangerous situation in the region.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 237 letters to you regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. Those letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 3 April 2006 (A/ES-10/326-S/2006/213) constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of those war crimes, State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

Accordingly, in follow-up to the above-mentioned letters, it is my profound regret to inform you that since our last letter to you, at least two more Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli occupying forces, raising the total number of martyrs killed since September 2000 to 3,803. (This number includes the names of four additional martyrs not listed in our last letter sent to you, dated 3 April 2006.) (The names of the martyrs that have been identified are listed in the annex to the present letter.)

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the Security Council and the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations

Annex to the identical letters dated 5 April 2006 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Names of martyrs killed by the Israeli occupying forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem* (Friday, 24 March to Wednesday, 5 April 2006)

Friday, 24 March 2006

Hammad Hamdane Moslih (17 years old)

Monday, 27 March 2006

Samer Sobhi Farihate

Friday, 31 March 2006

1. Abdelkarim Al Koka
2. Ahmad Macharika

Tuesday, 4 April 2006

Mohammad Farid Zayyate (15 years old)

Wednesday, 5 April 2006

Abduallah Ismail Al-Daalseh

* The total number of Palestinian martyrs killed by the Israeli occupying forces since 28 Sep 2000 is 3,803.